

When do you use *connaître*, and when do you use *savoir*?

Use *connaître*:

- when you know people, animals, and geographical places. Using **savoir** is impossible in this context. Here are some examples.

Je connais Constance. *I know Constance.*

Je connais le chien de mes voisins. *I know my neighbors' dog.*

Je connais Paris. *I know Paris.*

- when you are familiar with something but don't really know it like the back of your hand (whatever that means—you get the point).

Je connais la chanson. *I am familiar with the song.* (But I may not know all the words. If I did, I would use **savoir** instead of **connaître**.)

Je connais le chemin. *I know the way.* (But I could get a little lost if I'm not paying attention. If I knew it perfectly, I would use **savoir** instead of **connaître**.)

Never use *connaître*:

- before **que**. **Savoir** is always used in this context.

Je sais que vous n'aimez pas ces verbes. *I know that you don't like these verbs.*

- before any other clause beginning with an interrogative expression (**pourquoi**, **où**, **combien**, **comment**, etc.). **Savoir** is used in this context as well.

Je sais **pourquoi** tu es parti. *I know why you left.*

Je sais **où** tu habites. *I know where you live.*

Je sais **combien** il a payé. *I know how much he paid.*

- before an infinitive. **Savoir** is always used in this context.

Je sais conduire. *I know how to drive.*

Elle sait jouer du piano. *She knows how to play the piano.*

Rappel *Savoir* can also mean to know/know how, you don't need to use the word **comment** after *savoir*.

Savoir is used when you are more than “familiar with” something; in fact, you know something really well, as in the following examples.

Je sais la réponse. *I know the answer.* (I studied all night, and I'm positive that I'm going to get it right.)

Je sais la vérité. *I know the truth.* (I saw what happened, and I have no doubts whatsoever.)

Rappel When you use the verb *savoir*, you are referring to something that you know very well, but never someone or some place.